

LETTER WRITTEN TO ENGLISH PAPER
BY
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Forty years constitute a long period in a man's life. Taking a retroactive view of the many changes forces a person to the conclusion that the "world do move."

A reminiscent spirit frequently comes over the writer and especially of late, and particularly on this date. It was on September 1st, 1882, just 40 years ago today, I was then a mere lad in my teens when I bid adieu to my employer, Mr. James Naylor, soda water manufacturer, of Atherton, Lancashire, and his other employees, wended my way to the railroad station, and took the train for Liverpool, my destination being Salt Lake City, United States of America. Arriving in Liverpool soon found me booked for New York. That afternoon I went aboard the good old ship, "Wyoming."

My parents and the other members of the family had already left England, and made their home in the Rocky Mountain section of the United States. Upon the departure of the family, the writer sold the furniture and went to live with Mr. and Mrs. James Charleston (Morty). The old-timers will well remember Morty and his genial smile. While writing my mind goes back, and I see the events of those days as vividly as though they happened but yesterday, and the thought sends a thrill of joy through my soul. I guess very few boys had a happier time in their youth than that of the writer. I shall always cherish the youthful days during my early teens in dear old England. Of course, there was a reason. Very early I became infatuated with a certain young lady. Becoming aware of the fact, I found myself "in love," and where is the boy who could be otherwise than happy, especially when he thinks he has got the sweetest and best girl in the land? The young lady who had won my affection was such a girl, at least I thought so, brim full of mirth and song. She had a good voice and loved to sing, and sing she did, and although forty years ago, she still sings.

The young lady was Miss Sarah (Sally) Kirkman, of Darcy Lever, near Bolton. I question whether there was a happier couple in the land. How these two young folks enjoyed the green lanes of England and the many good times in visiting the seaport towns, but these local scenes were not to be theirs for long. They were destined for other parts of the world and to experience other environments. Saturday morning

September 2nd, 1882, the young lady also became a passenger of the "Wyoming." My employer, Mr. Naylor, was anxious to see his young employee sail, but being Saturday and pay-day for his men, he was obliged to remain at home. However, he had his wife make the trip. Not expecting anything of the kind, you can imagine the feelings of the boy when he saw Mrs. Naylor and her friend, Mrs. Charleston, come aboard the ship. They remained with us until the gong sounded, and all who were not passengers were told to leave the ship. The deck clear of visitors, the ship drew anchor and soon she began to sail slowly down the river Mersey. For several hours the boy and girl stood together by the side of the ship until the shores of the land of their birth faded away in the mist.

A voyage of ten days landed them in New York. The day following found them on board train ready for a trip by rail of nearly three thousand miles. They passed through many of the large cities of the United States and finally came in view of the Rocky Mountains. At Evanston, in the State of Wyoming, the girl left the train and made her home for a while with a sister, who had come to the station to meet her. The boy continued until he arrived at the little town of Echo, the terminal of the Union Pacific railroad. Here he was met by his father and mother and the other members of the family. It was a joyous meeting from the fact that it was the first time for years the entire family had been together.

The young couple remained in their respective homes until the following spring, when we find the boy and girl in Salt Lake City, the metropolis of the Rocky Mountain country, recognized as one of the most beautiful cities in America. Some time in the future, if you desire, I shall be delighted to give your readers a descriptive account of Salt Lake City, the headquarters of the Mormon Church, with the wonderful Mormon Temple, which took forty years to build and at a cost of \$4,000,000; St. Paul's and St. Mark's churches, State University buildings, High School and Public School buildings, etc. The wealthy people of this city take great delight in devoting their wealth to educating the youth.

The educational system of the City and State is the pride of the citizens. I have often heard the Governor of the State say that 85 per cent of the revenues of the State go for educational purposes. But back to my story. The boy having worked in the Naylor Soda Water Factory for years and understanding the making of syrups, etc., soon got a position in the leading drug store in the city, where he remained for a number of years.

August 2nd, 1883, the boy and girl assumed the responsibility of married life. In the fall of '89, the young man began to think of going into business for himself, and accordingly he resigned his position in the store, sold his home and located in the town of Heber, some 45 miles south-east of Salt Lake City. It was while located in the city of Heber they had the pleasure of a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Naylor, who had made a trip of more than 6,000 miles to see their former employee. The meeting was unexpected so far as we were concerned. They gave us a complete surprise, no word of their coming being sent until the day preceding their arrival we got a long distance telephone message from them saying they would be with us the following morning.

This was a most happy meeting. The visitors found the boy and girl grown into a young man and woman, with a family of five children, a home, and store building and stock upon a piece of ground all their own. The visitors remained with us a couple of weeks, enjoying themselves and being entertained by our friends and neighbors. While they were in Utah they visited the Indians, the farmers, the leading business men of the State and the leading men of the Mormon Church, and had one continuous visit of pleasure. Our only regret was that we could not arrange our affairs and return the compliment by a return visit to England. Since then Mr. and Mrs. Naylor have passed to the Great Beyond. God bless their memory.

We remained in Heber for about twelve years, when we sold the business and repurchased our home in Salt Lake City. All the family lives here in the city except the only girl, who makes her home in Los Angeles, California, with her husband. Our eldest son, Richard Kirkman, put in three years as a Mormon Missionary in Germany. While away he toured Europe, and before returning visited the former homes and friends of his parents. He died very suddenly about three years ago, leaving a widow and three children -- two boys and a little girl. He left the family in fairly good circumstances. The widow has just built a very nice five-roomed modern home, which is neatly furnished. She is raising her family in a very creditable manner, providing them with a piano, etc., and raising her children in an atmosphere of music, "the divine art." At the time of his death he and two of the other boys were interested in the Bridge Drug Company store. We have four or five registered pharmacists in our family.

During the world war our sixth son, Berry Kirkman, joined the American oversea forces, and put two years in France. Father and mother and all the other members of

the family, except John and I, have passed away. Father and sister Martha died in Coalville, Utah, some thirty years ago. Soon after this break in the family the remaining members moved to Southern Alberta, Canada. Since locating in the Dominion, mother, sister Jane and brother James have died. At the time of mother's death she was the oldest lady in Southern Alberta. Jane and James each left two sons and two daughters. James married Betsy Reece, of Par Brow, Tyldesley, who died over thirty years ago, and Jane was the wife of Charles Franklin Steele, of Bedford, Leigh.

The eight young men and women are getting along very well, and are a credit to their parents. Charles Franklin Steele, jun., is a newspaper man of the City of Lethbridge, Canada. The last four or five years I have done very little store work. I am devoting part of my time in charge of the drug department of the Latter-day Saints' Hospital. I prefer this work; it gives me more time to work around my home. The hospital is located in the city while our home is located some ten miles out. I make the trip night and morning.

We have a beautiful home, located in a rural district. The house is surrounded by fields, lawns, trees, flowers, etc.; the tramcars pass our door, and the church and school are nearby. A Radio Corporation is erecting a radio manufacturing plant, quarter of a mile from the home. In the field at the rear of the house are poultry-houses and Mrs. B. has ten or twelve hundred white leghorn hens. Our home is located almost at the base of a range of mountains with their beautiful scenery and summit towering skyward.

Mrs. B. never feels better than when at work in her kitchen cooking a rich chicken dinner and having several automobile loads of the family with their friends come out of town and enjoy "mother's cooking." There are three or four automobiles in the family, and are used pretty much nearly all the time.

We appreciate our birth and love the English people. There are very many of them here in Utah, and all seem to be very prosperous. We love the land of our adoption, and especially the fair state of Utah founded by Brigham Young and a company of Mormon pioneers. In the year 1847 this band of pioneers travelled over a thousand miles over trackless prairies, and on arriving in Salt Lake Valley on July 24th, 1847, they were a thousand miles from a base of supplies and in an Indian country. Since that date the Mormon and non-Mormon people together have built up a wonderful empire, with its mountains of wealth, its ranges of sheep and cattle, and its farms and beautiful valleys filled with good, clean, happy people.

The reports that go out that the Mormon people are bad and unfit to mingle with are false. Their towns and homes bespeak the noble character of the people. We have lived with them for all these years, and know that there is not a more musical people live on earth than the Mormons. The organ in the big tabernacle in Salt Lake City is the largest in the world, and its choir the same. Should any Mormon elders come the way of your readers treat them kindly. They are young men from good homes, and are not in your midst enticing young women to come with them to Utah. Like England, there are hosts of beautiful girls and women in Utah.

We have not heard from any of our English friends for more than 15 years. If this letter reaches any of them, we shall be pleased to hear from them.

Now, Mr. Editor, forty summers and as many winters have come and gone. Seven sons and one daughter and ten grandchildren are our portion. Grey hairs are appearing, and signs of growing old begin to manifest, but the mother is still full of mirth, and while going around performing her household duties sings her songs as happily as when in her teens working as a factory girl in Grey's Mills, Darcy Lever. She joins me in best wishes to all our former friends.

I remain,

RICHARD BRIDGE

Holliday, Salt Lake City,

Utah, U. S. A.

Noroni Kirkman Bridge
Born Haver City Sept 3, 1890

Neaton Kirkman Bridge

Born Haver City April 9, 1892

Dilbert Kirkman Bridge

Born Haver City N.C. Nov. 1, 1893

Berry Kirkman Bridge

Born in Haver City N.C. Nov. 16, 1897

Int. Reg.

Maratry Bridge Smith

1427 So 1300 E.

A. L. C. Mt 84105

Daughter of Dilbert Kirkman
Bridge